

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): An apparatus comprising:

a threshold detector having a first current comparator to determine if an input signal exceeds a threshold; and

a second current comparator coupled to receive an output of the first current comparator.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the threshold detector comprises a differential amplifier stage having an input stage comprising a first transistor and a second transistor having collectors and emitters coupled together.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the differential amplifier stage has a reference stage having a third transistor and a fourth transistor, the third and fourth transistors having emitters coupled to the emitters of the first and second transmitters.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the reference stage is coupled to receive a voltage reference from a half differential amplifier stage.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising a current source to bias the reference stage and a limiting amplifier coupled to the threshold detector.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the threshold detector is coupled to detect a loss of a received signal input into a limiting amplifier.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the received signal is derived from a high frequency optical signal.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the threshold detector is coupled to detect an absolute value of a differential stage output of the limiting amplifier.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising cross-coupled transistors coupled between the input stage and a resistor load to provide a feedback gain to the input stage.

Claims 10-16 (canceled)

Claim 17 (currently amended): A method comprising:  
determining an absolute value of a differential input; ~~and~~  
comparing the absolute value to a reference signal using a current comparator; and  
providing a common mode direct current feedback signal based on the absolute value and  
the reference signal to a current source.

Claim 18 (cancel)

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 17, further comprising providing an output of the current comparator that is indicative of a loss of received signal of an optical communication system.

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 17, further comprising receiving the differential input from a limiting amplifier.

Claims 21-29 (canceled)

Claim 30 (currently amended): An apparatus comprising:  
an absolute value detector to receive a differential input;  
a cascode current comparator coupled to an output of the absolute value detector; ~~and~~  
a latch coupled to the cascode current comparator; and  
a differential current comparator coupled between the cascode current comparator and the  
latch.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 30, further comprising a current source to provide a source current to the absolute value detector.

Claim 32 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 31, further comprising a reference circuit coupled to receive the source current and ~~generate~~ provide a tracking reference signal to the cascode current comparator.

Claim 33 (currently amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus of ~~claim 32, further~~ comprising:  
an absolute value detector to receive a differential input;

a cascode current comparator coupled to an output of the absolute value detector;

a current source to provide a source current to the absolute value detector;

a reference circuit coupled to receive the source current and provide a tracking reference signal to the cascode current comparator;

a common mode feedback circuit coupled to receive the output of the absolute value detector and the tracking reference signal and to generate a feedback signal to be provided to the current source; and

a latch coupled to the cascode current comparator.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim [[30]] 33, further comprising a differential current comparator coupled between the cascode current comparator and the latch.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 30, further comprising a plurality of buffers coupled to the latch to generate a differential output representative of a loss of received signal of the differential input.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the plurality of buffers each comprises a Darlington circuit.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the reference circuit comprises a plurality of Schmitt triggers.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the plurality of Schmitt triggers comprise a first Schmitt trigger having an output coupled to an input of a second Schmitt trigger.

Claim 39 (new): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second current comparator is to generate a high gain signal.

Claim 40 (new): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first current comparator comprises a cascode current comparator and the second current comparator comprises a differential current comparator.

Claim 41 (new): The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an absolute value detector coupled to receive the input signal from an amplifier stage.

Claim 42 (new): The apparatus of claim 41, further comprising a current source to provide a source current to the absolute value detector.

Claim 43 (new): The apparatus of claim 42, further comprising a reference circuit to generate a tracking reference signal.

Claim 44 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising a feedback circuit to generate a feedback signal to control the current source, the feedback signal based upon the tracking reference signal and the output of the absolute value detector.

Claim 45 (new): The method of claim 17, further comprising generating a differential signal based on comparing the absolute value to the reference signal.

Claim 46 (new): The method of claim 45, further comprising generating a high gain differential signal from the differential signal.

Claim 47 (new): The method of claim 17, further comprising controlling the current source current to provide a source current for an absolute value detector and a reference signal generator based on the common mode direct current feedback signal.

Claim 48 (new): The method of claim 17, further comprising using a cascode current comparator to compare the absolute value to the reference signal.

Claim 49 (new): The method of claim 17, further comprising generating the reference signal compensated for temperature variation.

Claim 50 (new): The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising a plurality of buffers coupled to the latch to generate a differential output representative of a loss of received signal of the differential input.

Claim 51 (new): The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the reference circuit comprises a plurality of Schmitt triggers.

Claim 52 (new): A system comprising:  
an absolute value detector to receive an input signal;  
a first current comparator coupled to receive an output of the absolute value detector, the first comparator to also receive a reference signal; and

a feedback circuit to receive the output of the absolute value detector and the reference signal and to generate a reference signal for a current source for the absolute value detector.

Claim 53 (new): The system of claim 52, further comprising a second current comparator to receive a differential output of the first current comparator.

Claim 54 (new): The system of claim 53, wherein the first current comparator comprises a cascode current comparator and the second current comparator comprises a differential current comparator.